



NOAA FISHERIES SERVICE



Allison Henry / NEFSC



Family: Delphinidae
Population: ~ 3-4 million
Status: Least Concern
Length: 2.44—2.74m/8—9ft.
Weight: 149.69—199.58kg./330—440lbs.

Short-beaked Common Dolphin (*Delphinus delphis*)

Description

Short-beaked common dolphins are slender with a moderately long beak and tall falcate dorsal fin. They have a white belly and a dark gray dorsal cape that dips in a v-shaped “saddle” on either side of the body. The sides of the body are yellow or tan in the front half and a light gray from the back half to tailstock. There is a complex color pattern on the face including a dark eye patch.

Habitat and Distribution

Short-beaked common dolphins are distributed along the continental shelf and pelagic waters of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. Confusion with long-beaked common dolphins creates some uncertainty in distribution.

Sounds

Short-beaked common dolphins produce many different vocalizations including whistles for communication (most often upsweeps and downsweeps) and echolocation clicks for foraging.

Feeding

Short-beaked common dolphins feed primarily at night on squid and small schooling fish such as anchovies, lanternfish, hake, and deep-sea smelt.

Threats

The main current threat faced by short-beaked common dolphins is incidental take in commercial fishing gear (such as longlines, driftnets, gillnets, trawls).

Fun Fact

Short-beaked common dolphins are usually found in large groups with hundreds of individuals, but occasionally they have been seen in groups of thousands!!